

New Criteria for Identification of Specific Learning Disabilities Training PowerPoint

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Donna Parker, Kathy Strunk, Ann Sanders-Eakes

Introduction

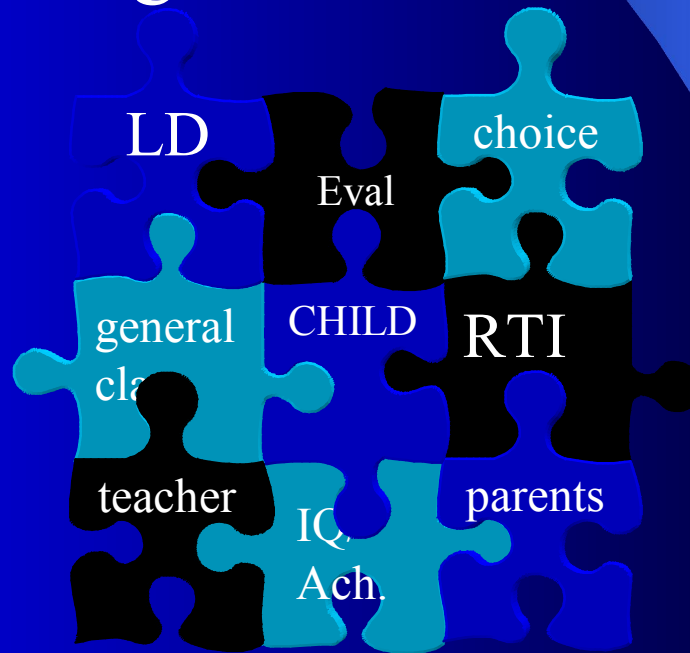
- Tennessee's new State Board of Education criteria for identification of Specific Learning Disabilities was passed December 2007.
- Today, we will be reviewing the new criteria and discussing changes that impact the entire evaluation process from pre-referral all the way to provision of special education services.

Agenda

- Review of Definition of Specific Learning Disabilities
- Presentation of the nine (9) evaluation standards
- Evaluation Procedures and Participants
- Procedural Addendum A: The Responsiveness to Intervention (RTI) Method of Identification
- Procedural Addendum B: The IQ/Achievement Discrepancy Method of Identification
- Discussion of local district template for RTI
- Where to Get More Information

Overview

- The big picture? Improving instruction for ALL children while reducing inappropriate referrals and improving the timeliness of intervention.



Vocabulary to Note

- Definition of “Specific Learning Disability” (essentially unchanged)*
- Scientifically-validated instruction
- Data-based documentation
- Progress monitoring data
- Multi-tiered, appropriate interventions
- State-approved Responsiveness to Intervention (RTI) Method

Please note:

An asterisk (*) will be used to denote sections unchanged in their concept. Some wording may be slightly different, but the concept was in the previous standard.

Nine Evaluation Standards for SLD

- Local Districts or Individual Schools have a choice in the methodology to be used (RTI or IQ/Discrepancy), but regardless of the method used,
nine (9) standards must be met:

(First page of the new criteria under 2. a.)

Standard 1* (concept unchanged)

(1) Evidence that underachievement in a child was not due to a *lack of appropriate* (the child's State-approved grade level standards) scientifically-validated *instruction* (instruction that has been researched using rigorous, well designed, objective, systematic, and peer-reviewed studies) in reading and math;

Standard 2* (concept unchanged)

(2) Evidence that prior to, or as a part of, the referral process, the child was provided *appropriate instruction* in *general education settings*;

Standard 3* (concept in NCLB previously)

(3) Evidence that instruction was delivered by *appropriately trained personnel*;

Standard 4

(4) data-based documentation of *repeated formal assessment* of student progress during instruction (progress monitoring data) that has been *collected and recorded frequently* (a minimum of one data point per week in each area of academic concern);

Standard 5

(5) Evidence that *progress monitoring data* was provided to the child's *parents* at a minimum of *once every four and one-half (4.5) weeks*;

Standard 6* (unchanged in concept)

(6) Evidence that, when provided scientifically-validated instruction and appropriate interventions and learning experiences, the child did *not achieve at a proficiency level or rate consistent with State-approved grade level standards or with the child's age*, in one or more of the following areas; (a) oral expression, (b) listening comprehension, (c) written expression, (d) basic reading skills, (e) reading fluency skills, (f) reading comprehension, (g) mathematics calculation, and (h) mathematics problem solving.

Standard 7* (concept was there previously)

(7) Evidence that the child exhibits a *pattern of strengths and weaknesses* in performance, achievement, or both, relative to State-approved grade-level standards, the child's age, or intellectual development that is determined to be *relevant to the identification of a Specific Learning Disability* (as defined in the definition of Specific Learning Disabilities); and

Standard 8* (concept unchanged)

(8) Evidence that the child's learning problems are *not primarily due to* Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment, Orthopedic Impairment, Mental Retardation; Emotional Disturbance; limited English proficiency; environmental or cultural factors; motivational factors; or situational trauma (i.e., temporary, sudden, or recent change in the child's life);

Standard 9

b. A child whose *characteristics meet the definition* of a child having a Specific Learning Disability *may be identified* as a child eligible for Special Education services *if*:

- (1) All of the requirements of standards 2.a. (1) – 2.a. (8) have been met;
- (2) *The evidence and documentation is evaluated and results verify that the characteristics exhibited by the child meet the definition of SLD; and
- (3) *Documentation, including observation and/or assessment, of how Specific Learning Disabilities adversely impacts the child's educational performance in his/her learning environment.

Evaluation Procedures **EITHER / OR**

State-Approved Responsiveness to
Intervention (RTI) Method of
Identification

OR

State-Approved IQ/Achievement
Discrepancy Method of Identification

Evaluation Participants

*(essentially unchanged)

- (1) the parent;
- (2) the child's general education classroom teacher;
- (3) a licensed special education teacher; a licensed school psychologist, licensed psychological examiner, licensed senior psychological examiner, or licensed psychologist;
- (4) at least one person qualified to conduct an individual diagnostic evaluation (e.g., licensed special education teacher, licensed speech-language teacher/pathologist or licensed remedial reading teacher/specialist); and
- (5) Other professional personnel as indicated (e.g., Optometrist or Ophthalmologist).

Procedural Addendum A: The (RTI) Method of Identification of Specific Learning Disabilities

1. RTI Defined

2. Evaluation

(1) The method may be used when the following requirements have been met:

(a) districts and/or schools *must receive state approval*; and

(b) the submitted *plan must follow specific guidelines*.

(c) those guidelines follow the *standards* of excellence presented in the IRIS Center's RTI Online Modules and the Template for RTI Guidelines.

2. Evaluation, continued, (2) A State-approved RTI Method must include:

- (a) *high-quality instruction* and *positive behavioral supports* provided by *appropriately trained personnel*;
- (b) *scientifically-validated interventions* appropriate for suspected area of disability;
- (c) *frequent, ongoing progress monitoring* to evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions and inform instruction that includes:
 - i. data-based documentation on student's response
 - ii. data-based documentation of intervention integrity, fidelity to design, and intensity; and
 - iii. Periodic collaborative student support team review

RTI Requirements continued

(d) *documentation of *parental input*; and, as appropriate, the *child's input*; and

(e) *documentation that the child's learning problems are *not primarily due to*:

lack of appropriate instruction in reading and math; limited English proficiency; Visual Impairment; Hearing Impairment; Orthopedic Impairment; Mental Retardation; Emotional Disturbance; Environmental or cultural factors; motivational factors; and situational trauma.

2. Evaluation, continued, (3)

Evaluation using a State-approved RTI Method must include:

- (a) data demonstrating the student's *non-responsiveness to scientifically-validated interventions* supported by comprehensive, curriculum-based data;
- (b) *documentation that *rules out other disabilities or factors* including the administration of a linguistically and culturally-fair individual, standardized scale of intelligence (short-form measures of cognitive ability established by the State as valid and reliable may be used); and
- (c) *a comprehensive psycho-educational evaluation when the assessment results from the previous standards listed in (3)(a) and (3)(b) are *inconclusive*.

Procedural Addendum B: The IQ/Achievement Discrepancy Method of Identification*

1. The IQ/Achievement Discrepancy Method of Identification Defined.

2. Evaluation

Most notable -

- (1) The Discrepancy Method must include documentation that all the standards in the Specific Learning Disabilities Evaluation Section 2.a.(1)-2.a.(8) and Evaluation Section 2.b.(1) through 2.b.(3) have been met.

The nine (9) standards must be met.

Evaluation, (2) Evaluation using the Discrepancy Method must also include:

- (a) *an individual multi-factored assessment of cognitive ability;
- (b) *an individual standardized assessment of academic achievement;
- (c) documentation of performance on all of the following:
 - i. group or individually administered achievement tests; and
 - ii. criterion-referenced assessments or curriculum/performance-based assessments;

(2) Evaluation, continued

- (d) *at least two documented observations of the child's educational performance in the general education classroom including:
 - i. an indirect observation by the child's general education classroom teacher, and
 - ii. a direct observation by a professional other than the person providing the indirect observation (...);

(2) Evaluation must include, continued:

- (e)*documentation of parental input; and, as appropriate, the child's input; and
- (f) *documentation that the child's learning problems are not primarily due to:
 - i. lack of appropriate instruction in reading and math;
 - ii. limited English proficiency;
 - iii. Visual Impairment;
 - iv. Hearing Impairment;
 - v. Orthopedic Impairment;
 - vi. Mental Retardation;
 - vii. Emotional Disturbance;
 - viii. environmental or cultural factors;
 - ix. motivational factors; and
 - x. situational trauma.

What about processing deficits?

- The standards no longer include processing deficits to identify SLD; however...
 - Assessment specialists may choose to gather this additional information but it is important that additional assessment does not delay evaluation

Template for RTI Guidelines

RTI Guidelines *must be developed, submitted by the LEA, and approved* prior to the use of RTI to identify specific learning disabilities.

The template is posted on the web.

Summary

- It's a *new day* in the identification of learning disabilities.
- *Collaboration* is key to implementation.
- Although *gradual phase in* is expected, meeting the *nine standards* prior to referral is *mandatory* and will be *monitored*. Be sure your LEA can *show progress toward implementation*.
- The IRIS Center Modules were developed to *assist LEAs* with implementation.

Where to Get More Information

- Web-ex training will be archived and accessible for 60 days at (TBA).
- The IRIS Center Modules are found at:
<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/>
- Use the Division of Special Education website and Assessment webpage:
<http://www.state.tn.us/education/speced/>.
- FAQs are being compiled to be posted on the Sp Ed Assessment webpage by March 1st.